

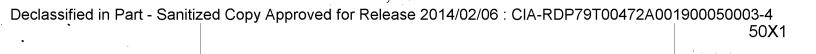
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HIGHLIGHTS

Moscow followed up today on the 17 April Soviet-DRV communiqué with a tough Pravda editorial stressing the importance of Soviet military aid to the DRV. Premier Kosygin also made a speech today in which he took a very militant stand against US actions in Vietnam, and urged the adoption of DRV proposals for settling the Vietnam question. The DRV delegation to the Moscow talks has stopped off in Peiping where Chinese leaders appear to be making a major effort to counter Moscow's initiative with North Vietnam. In South Vietnam, the Viet Cong last night made a minor penetration of the US marine security perimeter at the Da Nang air base.

- I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam:
 Nine American helicopter crewmen have been killed
 by Communist ground fire in the Qui Nhon area of
 coastal Binh Dinh Province (Para. 1). A Viet Cong
 unit of undetermined strength last night made a
 minor penetration of the US marine security perimeter at Da Nang air base for the first time (Para.
 2). ARVN forces in the strength of three battalions
 are continuing a sweep operation in western Tay Ninh
 Province, but no contact has thus far been made with
 the Viet Cong (Paras. 3-5). One hundred and six
 Communist guerrillas have been killed in a two-day
 ARVN search-and-destroy operation in Binh Dinh Province (Para. 6).
- II. Political Developments in South Vietnam: The US Mission in Saigon is considering steps to counter what appears to be evasion of Mekong River shipping controls which were set up to prevent war materiel from reaching the Viet) Cong (Para. 1). Premier Quat is continuing a series of trips to South Vietnamese (provinces (Para. 3).
- III. Military Developments in North Vietnam: Partial results of the 19 April air strikes on North Vietnam are available. They indicate that

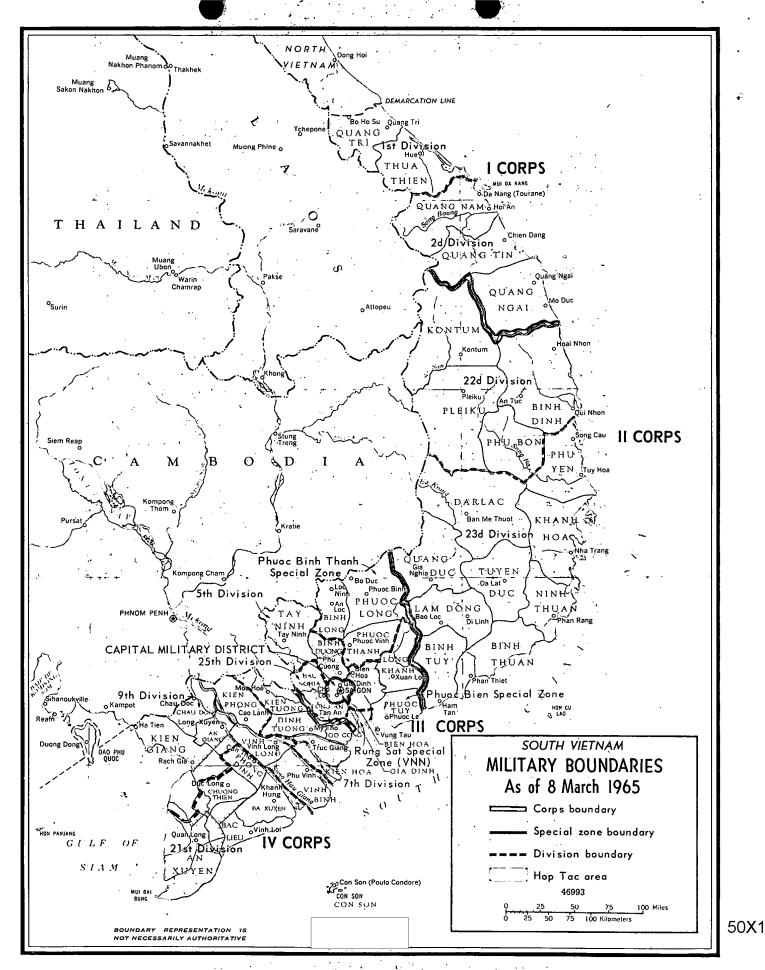
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most of the road reconnaissance missions did not turn up any worth while targets; however, ordnance was expended on several barracks areas and other military installations (Paras. 1-3). There is now some additional evidence that the DRV may be stockpiling antibiotics and other drugs (Paras 4).

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Communist Political Developments: has followed up on the joint Soviet-DRV communique of 17 April with a tough Pravda editorial which stresses the importance of Soviet military aid to the DRV. Soviet Premier Kosygin, in a speech today, took a militant line against US actions in Vietnam and reiterated the determination of the Soviet Union to assist in the DRV "struggle against US aggression" (Paras. 1-5). The North Vietnamese delegation to the Moscow talks is now in Peiping, where the Chinese appear to be making a major effort to counter Moscow's initiative (Para. 6). In a commentary today on the nonaligned nations' appeal, the DRV News Agency reaffirmed the four-point proposal set forth by Premier Pham Van Dong on 8 April as the "basis for the soundest" settlement of the Vietnam question.



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I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

- 1. Eight US crew members of two armed UH-1B helicopters were killed on 19 April when their aircraft were struck by Viet Cong small arms fire and exploded in the Qui Nhon area of Binh Dinh Province, about 280 miles northeast of Saigon. The American pilot of a third UH-1B was also killed by ground fire, but the copilot flew the aircraft safely back to base. The three helicopters were supporting an airlift of Vietnamese troops into battle when the incident occurred.
- 2. Last night, Communist guerrillas for the first time penetrated the US Marine security perimeter at Da Nang air base, slightly wounding two marines with a barrage of hand grenades and directing small arms fire at a battery emplacement. The explosion at Da Nang air base which occurred on 18 April is still being investigated, but so far there is no definite evidence of sabotage.
- 3. Three battalions of ARVN troops are continuing a sweep of the dense forest area in western Tay Ninh Province which was subjected to saturation bombing attacks by US and Vietnamese aircraft on 15 April. Although some Viet Cong bodies have been located, a complete count of guerrilla losses is not yet available. Initial reports indicate that ground forces have captured a substantial quantity of abandoned Viet Cong materiel, foodstuffs, documents, and weapons. In addition, several permanent structure complexes were discovered and destroyed.
- 4. Among the 22 pounds of documents recovered by the government forces reportedly were guerrilla plans for destroying government villages and enlarging rebel-held areas, especially in Kontum and Pleiku provinces.

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- 6. In Binh Dinh Province, 106 Communist guerrillas were killed as the result of a large-scale ARVN search-and-destroy operation conducted during 15-16 April against the 50th main force Viet Cong battalion and one local force Viet Cong company. Government casualties were placed at seven killed and 20 wounded.
- 7. Approximately 30-35 camouflaged junks were detected by surveillance aircraft about 11 miles south of Qui Nhon on 18 April. A South Vietnamese gunboat was directed to block the possible escape of the junks until they could be attacked by aircraft. The USS Buck and USS Rowan proceeded to the area to assist the USS Taylor in radar coverage at the scene. At last report, an FC-47 was engaged in attacking the junk concentration.
- 8. MACV's military report for 17 April shows 71 Communist-initiated incidents, four of which occurred during the reporting period. Small-scale terrorism, hamlet entry and harassment, and sabotage against government lines of communication remained the basic theme of guerrilla activity.
- 9. Government-initiated ground operations of battalion strength or larger declined on 17 April from 21 to 19, with five initiated and seven terminated; none of the operations resulted in significant contact with the enemy. Delayed MACV reports state that an ARVN search-and-destroy operation initiated in Khanh Hoa Province on 13 April and terminated on 15 April produced Viet Cong losses of 13 killed. Another 22 killed or wounded reportedly were carried away. One ARVN soldier was killed and eight were wounded.

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- 10. Small unit actions conducted on 17 April increased to 2,242. Six contacts were made with the Viet Cong, with minor losses reported on both sides:
- 11. While the level of VNAF/USAF combat air operations remained generally unchanged, a slight decline took place in logistic and resupply activity. Pilot reports from combat missions flown country—wide on 17 April list 12 Viet Cong killed and 103 structures destroyed or damaged.

II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

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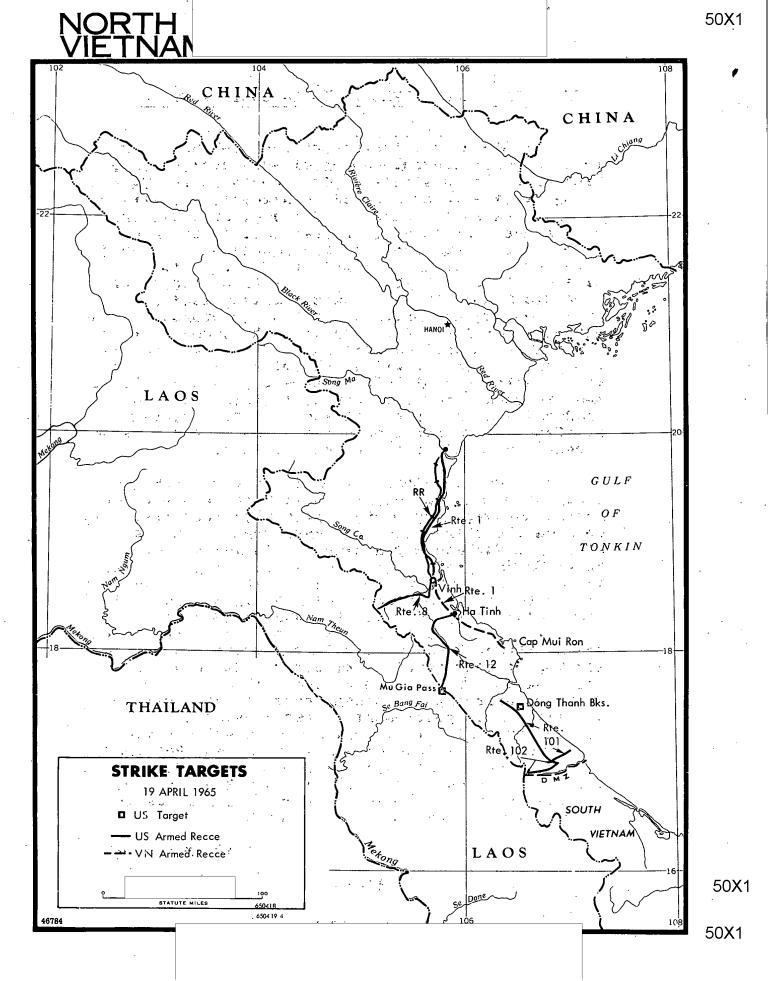
1. Since shipping controls on Mekong River traffic were tightened about mid-November, the US Mission believes some shipping companies have begun using vevasive terms wind their amanifests in in disting either cargoes or country of origin, in order to bypass the controls. The mission believes some ships carrying proscribed cargo, possibly destined for the Viet Cong, may have been diverted to Sihanoukville in Cambodia, rather than shipped upriver to Phnom Penh. The mission is also attempting to check on Cambodian imports of possible component materials for explosives, which showed a significant drop in 1964 on Cambodia's import statistics. In the meantime, the mission is considering measures by which US customs personnel could be used to assist in river control work, either by boarding vessels or at checkpoints, and may urge the Saigon government to ban transit of any vessels whose cargo manifests are not explicit.

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3. Premier Quat has been making a series of visits to the provinces. Following his trips to the northernmost provinces and the delta, he toured the Pleiku and Dalat areas late last week in the company of ranking military officers. In opening a technical training center for tribesmen, and in other speeches, he stressed themes of national unity as well as his government's determination to carry out any specific promises it makes to the tribes.

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MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH VIETNAM

- US Air Force, US Navy, and Vietnamese Air Force planes on 19 April conducted a number of day and night armed reconnaissance missions along routes 1, 1A, 8, 12, 101, 102, and 107. dition, several barracks areas and military installations were attacked. Vietnamese Skyraiders made a rocket pass on a bridge along Route 1A with unknown results. One AlH was shot down south of The pilot is presumed dead.
- US Air Force fighter bombers, conducting an armed reconnaissance of routes 8 and 12, reported direct hits on the Kim Cuong chokepoint on Route 8. Results of the strike against the Mu Gia Pass Military Camp are unknown, although pilots report 80 percent of their ordnance on target. The US Navy armed reconnaissance of routes 101, 102, and 107 produced negligible results. No vehicles were spotted and weather precluded the completion of the

entire mission.

Additional quantities of medical supplies are arriving in North Vietnam. The Czech ship Orava, which loaded in East European ports, apparently is carrying a large quantity of penicillin. It is possible that these deliveries reflect North Vietnamese measures to assure adequate stockpiles of antibiotics and other drugs, although 1965 trade pacts specified that Eastern Europe would deliver medical supplies.

There have been no

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reports that Hanoi has sought to purchase unusual quantities of pharmaceuticals from either Japan or France, non-Communist sources which in the past have supplied medical items to the DRV.

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V. COMMUNIST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

- l. Moscow has followed up on the joint Soviet-DRV communiqué of 17 April with a 19 April Pravda editorial which reasserted the general lines of the communiqué and laid particular stress upon the importance of Soviet military aid to the DRV. Pravda asserted that the Soviet Union "has undertaken in a timely manner all measures needed to help strengthen the defense capability of North Vietnam," and claimed that Soviet assistance "is being effected in the envisaged volume and order."
- 2. Pravda also stressed that "the Vietnamese people greatly value" Soviet support. The 17 April Soviet-DRV communiqué emphasized the "profound gratitude" of the North Vietnamese for Soviet assistance which, in effect, undercuts Chinese charges that Moscow has withheld aid to the DRV in collaboration with "US imperialism." The Soviets have all along insisted that Moscow, unlike Peiping, has been supporting Hanoi with "deeds not words," and the joint statement seems pointedly aimed at supporting Moscow's argument.
- 3. Soviet Premier Kosygin, in a tough 19 April speech, warned that the United States was approaching an "extremely dangerous borderline" as a result of extending the scale of military action against North Vietnam. He assailed US militarists for using "inhuman instruments" in Vietnam such as napalm, phosphorous bombs, and gases. He declared that the US has no monopoly on modern arms and that the use of such weapons might invite retaliation in kind.
- 4. Kosygin claimed that Soviet talks with the North Vietnamese "proceeded very well," and that agreement was reached concerning the "form and means" of the struggle against US "imperialists"; the further strengthening of DRV defensive potential; and the "settling of the problems" of Indochina on the basis of the Geneva agreements.

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- 5. Although he did not refer specifically to the President's 7 April speech, Kosygin attacked the contention that recent talk in Washington about a peaceful settlement constituted a "new, realistic approach." The Soviet premier asserted that such statements are valueless in light of the intention of "US ruling circles" to continue their intervention in South Vietnam. Kosygin maintained that the problems of Vietnam cannot be solved with "vague promises and contradictory statements." The Soviet leader urged the adoption of Pham Van Dong's April four-point formulation setting forth the basis for the "soundest" settlement of the Vietnam crisis.
- 6. The DRV delegation to the Moscow talks arrived in Peiping on 18 April. Peiping radio on the 19th said that discussions had been held by the delegation with top Chinese leaders, including Liu Shao-chi and Teng Hsiao-ping. The Chinese appear to be making a major effort in private to counter the Soviet initiative with North Vietnam. A group of government and party leaders, including four full politburo members and key officials from the central committee, turned out on 19 April for a banquet to honor the Vietnamese. So far, Peiping has not broadcast or commented on the Soviet-DRV communiqué of 17 April.
- 7. Peiping's hard position on Vietnam continues unchanged in Chinese propaganda. The Chinese press on 19 April featured speeches delivered yesterday by politburo members Teng Hsiao-ping and Peng Chen on Vietnam under the headline "Drive US Aggressors Out of Vietnam." Peiping also appears to be searching for indications of domestic opposition in the US to American policy toward Vietnam. According to the People's Daily commentator on 19 April, the march of "more than twenty thousand people on the White House" on 17 April showed the "widespread discontent" with and "opposition" to the Johnson administration's "policy of aggression against South Vietnam."

- 8. The DRV News Agency announced on 19 April that it had been authorized by the DRV Government to make a statement on the 17 nonaligned nations' appeal. While the agency's statement did not specifically reject the appeal, it declared that Premier Pham Van Dong's four-point proposal contained in his 8 April address to the National Assembly is the "basis for the soundest political settlement" of the Vietnam question. In this speech, Pham listed four provisions which "if recognized" would "create favorable conditions" making it "possible to consider" a reconvening of an international conference in the pattern of the 1954 Geneva Conference. These four provisions were:
 - 1. US troop withdrawal from South Vietnam, and an end to the air strikes in the North.
 - 2. Recognition by both North and South Vietnam of the provisions of the Geneve agreements prohibiting foreign military alliances and the presence of foreign military personnel in Vietnam.
 - 3. A settlement of internal Vietnamese affairs by Vietnamese people, according to the program of the Liberation Front.
 - 4. The peaceful reunification of Vietnam without foreign interference.

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